

LITERARY NOTES.

"Harper's Weekly" for December 13 is to be a special holiday number, beautifully illustrated, and full of the spirit of Christmas. Mr. Pyle, Mr. Frost, and Mr. Dickey have contributed some clever drawings.

"The Pall Mall Gazette" is the first English newspaper to take up the idea of a Christmas number. It announces a forthcoming "Extra," which will contain a vivid Ghost Story by Mr. R. L. Stevenson—one, it is said, enough to freeze the blood of a grenadier.

Two hundred copies of the Lyon book were distributed before the injunction was made effective, and new large prices are offered for them.

A few pieces left in MS. have been added by Mr. Palgrave to his forthcoming edition of Keats's poems.

Mr. Ruskin, it is said, intends shortly to close the production of his very irregular serial, "Fors Clavigera." He does this in order to get a little leisure in which to write his own biography.

"Every prudent man of this prying generation," says "The London Echo," "will be his own biographer."

Mr. Whitman, "The Pall Mall Gazette" thinks, is "not yet but the nine-days' wonder of an intellectual aristocracy," and it adds that "the true poet of them all must have something of the singing quality as well as a little reverence for the language in which he sings."

Mr. Marion Crawford's new novel, "An American Politician," has reached "The London Daily News," that the word "Papash" is the favorite beginning of sentences and remarks in Boston, Massachusetts; "No one there," it declares, "is quite certain of anything. A hostess says to a gentleman who is paying a visit, 'Perhaps if you sang the bell I could send a message,' and when the servant arrives she suggests,

"Perhaps you could bring us a little cake, Sarah?" If a stranger asks for stings at his hotel he may not get them, but he will be informed that perhaps if he goes to the General Post Office he may get some there. The guards of the railway trains don't yell out "Perhaps this is Boston" or "Perhaps this is New York," but it seems as if they ought in consistency to do so. That English people say, "You know," and "Don't you know," and "That sort of thing" is so familiar to ourselves that we have ceased to notice it as a mannerism, though it shows amazingly in Mr. Crawford's novel against the background of Bostonian phonology."

Mr. Blaine's book, it is understood, is in such demand that it is with difficulty that printing-house and bindery are keeping up with it. The author is already vigorous at work upon the second volume, which promises to be even more valuable than the first. Perhaps the liveliest testimony to the merits of this unique historical work is the fact that through the most fiery of modern political campaigns it has escaped all attack. Its accuracy, its strict impartiality, and its strong and brilliant style have deserved and won to admiration even the bitterest of its author's critics. It is having a sale extraordinary in the history of subscription books, and the profits both of author and publisher have been great.

THE CHRISTMAS CARD EXHIBITION.

Undiscouraged by the more or less unsatisfactory results of previous Christmas card exhibitions, by the failure of the Harper prize competitions, Mr. Prang is again to the fore with a "prize exhibition of designs for Christmas cards." Mr. Prang has profited by past experience. In 1850 his invitation brought upon him a flood of designs, many of them unappreciated, many borrowed, "without credit," and the majority of distinctly amateurish execution. In 1851 the exhibitors showed a better understanding of the elementary proposition that Christmas cards might have some reference to Christmas, but they were again a dearth of original ideas, coupled with much crude or slovenly workmanship. There was little change in 1852.

This year Mr. Prang has not opened his doors all power. He has obtained designs from twenty-two artists, mostly to be classed with those whom we still call "the younger painters," none unknown or amateur, but all with a record of some good work. This course may exclude an unrecognized genius here and there, but for this possible loss there is a certain gain in the elimination of a hundred or two designs which it would be a waste of time to consider. The former theory of an "artistic verdict" from the votes of visitors or of artist and art critics has been discarded. The awards in the exhibition are made by the votes of dealers and the dealers naturally vote for the designs which they believe, after long practical experience, will prove most acceptable to the popular taste. The designs may be as variable with "aesthetic" opinions, but it is likely that the judgment of those who sell Christmas cards will be more apt to give the great public the styles of cards which the public wants. An intelligent well-informed critic can thus see through the designs of dealers which are the best, and we are sure that the dealers have given their careful and prayerful consideration. With a commercial standard of awards thus frankly acknowledged, the whole matter is simplified at once. Mr. Prang is to be regarded as the head of a wholesale house, and the colors on the price as retail merchants who come to sell the goods which they think will "take the best" in their markets. It would be clearly preposterous for the makers of goods which are not purchased to accuse the retailers of being guilty of piracy.

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS,
749 AND 745 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

OLD BOOKS BOUGHT. Highest price paid for old and new books on the Christmas tree, the mistletoe and the holly bough are the motives which we note as the favorites in looking at the twenty-four designs at the gallery of Richard & Co. Messrs. Low, Dewing, Blodfield, Beckwith and Miss Wheeler come first with what may be termed ideal religious subjects. Mr. Low has drawn a group of angels with long trumpets behind the Christ Child and the Virgin, whose eyes are fixed on the strain of the singer in ecstasy at the sound of the *Gloria* or *ecclae*. We confess to a strong liking for Mr. Low's design, on account of the simple, devout earnestness which breathes in his figures. His sweet-faced singing angel shows a fairly medieval similitude. There are such hints in the composition, but in none of the designs is this aspect of Christmas presented with more true feeling.

Deering and Blodfield have both tried for "artistic effect," but they have lost in appropriateness. Mr. Dewing, borrowing freely from his picture "The Prodigal," preserves something of its delicacy of coloring, but what Christmas feeling is there in these gaunt visaged, sorrowful, hollow-eyed angels? With our suggestions, however, of Mr. Horne's fine designs, we feel that Mr. Blodfield's songster can bring no beauty but a sword, judging from their intensefied action. In a design of this nature there should surely be a quantity of repose, but in this instance the impulsive movement of the singer is the main feature.

Mr. Beckwith's drawing of the manger scene in the background of the Christ-child in the background, the ascension of whose body is held by the rankish ends of his hair over one eye, there is really nothing to be said. And we must see that the real lead in this field is given to Mr. Horne's design, who passes through a sunburst in the middle against an illuminated background.

The idea of Mr. Horne's, "The Angelus," has been that of a child making a Christmas carol on one design in the day, street, with an inland picture of lighted church and churchgoers, and on another, the angel songs above the snow-covered trees, the bells of the church. A prominent part that we can mistake the nature of the musical service in which his characters are engaged. The familiar Christmas waltzes uttered in various ways in different parts of the world are not mentioned.

Burnham's pretty children, apparently howling at the mistletoe, for holly sprigs and flowers, are to be seen in the designs of Mr. Horne's. The last shows a group of singers and players around a piano. Except for the border these good people might as well be singing an Easter hymn as a Christmas anthem.

Mr. Horne's designs are the most prominent part that we can mistake the nature of the musical service in which his characters are engaged. The familiar Christmas waltzes uttered in various ways in different parts of the world are not mentioned.

Mrs. Williams' and Mr. Turner's are figure pieces, they are not especially pertinent. The former presents three female figures, dressed in white, and the latter shows a group of singers and players around a piano. Except for the border these good people might as well be singing an Easter hymn as a Christmas anthem.

Mr. Dickey's designs are the most prominent part that we can mistake the nature of the musical service in which his characters are engaged. The familiar Christmas waltzes uttered in various ways in different parts of the world are not mentioned.

Mrs. Salisbury's designs are the most prominent part that we can mistake the nature of the musical service in which his characters are engaged. The familiar Christmas waltzes uttered in various ways in different parts of the world are not mentioned.

Mr. Caliga's low-toned sketch of a Christmas tree, which has selected his own card, is the most prominent part that we can mistake the nature of the musical service in which his characters are engaged. The familiar Christmas waltzes uttered in various ways in different parts of the world are not mentioned.

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